

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 008301
ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY AF/S:JDAVIDOW
APPROVED BY AF:RMMOOSE
AF/S:DKEOGH
S/S-O:SVALERGA

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 008301

EXDIS, FOR AMBASSADOR OR CHARGE ONLY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV,RH,UK,US

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: NATURE OF OWEN'S COMMENTS TO THE
SOUTH AFRICANS

REF:A. PRETORIA 143;B)LONDON 20718

1. I WAS STRUCK BY BOTHA'S ASSERTION (PARA 5C OF
REFTEL A) THAT THE SOUTH AFRICANS HAD TOLD SMITH, "AS
OWEN HAD REQUESTED", NOT TO HOLD OUT FOR A BLOCKING THIRD
OF THE PARLIAMENT, BUT CONCENTRATE ON MOVING QUICKLY
TO A BLACK MAJORITY GOVERNMENT. REFTTEL B'S ACCOUNT OF
FOURIE'S MEETING WITH OWEN IN LONDON INDICATES THAT
FOURIE HAD SAID THAT IT WAS HIS OWN CONVICTION THAT SMITH
WOULD NOT LET TALKS FOUNDER OVER THE ONE-THIRD DEMAND.
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THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT OWEN MADE ANY SUCH "REQUEST"
AS INDICATED BY BOTHA.

2. IT IS OF COURSE POSSIBLE THAT OWEN, OR SOME OTHER
UK OFFICIAL, PASSED THAT MESSAGE TO FOURIE OR BOTHA OUT
OF OUR EARSHOT. HOWEVER, BEFORE RAISING THE POINT WITH
THE BRITISH, AND PERHAPS SUBSEQUENTLY WITH THE SOUTH

AFRICANS, I WOULD WELCOME AMBASSADOR BREWSTER'S AND
AMBASSADOR BOWDLER'S COMMENTS ON THIS TOPIC, PARTICULARLY
WHETHER BOTHAS ASSERTION MIGHT BE TRUE, AND, IF SO WHAT

STEPS, IF ANY, WE AND THE BRITISH COULD JOINTLY UNDERTAKE
TO CORRECT THE MISIMPRESSION THAT WE ARE BECOMING ACTIVE-
LY INVOLVED IN NEGOTIATING THE TERMS OF AN INTERNAL SETTLE-
MENT. CHRISTOPHER

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NNN

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